



# Visitor Survey of Day-use Visitors at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site

Final Report

Terry Bergerson  
and  
Wesley Mouw

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

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*Nature*  
**HISTORY**  
*Discovery*

## ***ACKNOWLEDGMENTS***

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### **Objectives**

Understanding opinions of park users about issues such as the quality of facilities, social and resource conditions, and how they use these parks is critical to providing adequate programs and services. Project objectives were to describe day user activities, demographic characteristics, and opinions about conditions and management at this park and provide recommendations for maintaining or improving conditions at this park.

### **Methods**

Data were obtained from questionnaires administered to random samples of day user visitors to the park between July 4 and September 22, 2013. The day-use visitor survey involved on-site intercepts. The total number of completed questionnaires was  $n = 227$  with a response rate of 82%. The sample size allows generalizations about the population of day users at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site at a margin of error of  $\pm 6.5\%$  at the 95% confidence level.

### **Results**

#### ***Personal and Visit Characteristics***

- The most popular activities were picnicking or barbecuing (63%), hiking or walking (47%), and swimming / wading (37%). The least popular activities were running or jogging (5%), fishing (7%), and bicycling on local roads (7%).
- The most common main activity groups were picnicking or barbecuing (41%), and swimming / wading (22%). The least common activity groups were fishing (1%), bird or wildlife watching (1%), and bicycling on local roads (1%).
- Day users spent an average of almost three hours in the park, with 66% of users spending up to three hours in the park. The majority of day users spent either one hour (27%), or four to five hours (27%) in the park.
- Many visitors were local with 77% living within 30 miles from the park, and another 13% originating 31 to 60 miles from the park. Only 10% of respondents traveled over 60 miles to reach the park. Day users, on average, traveled approximately 29 miles to visit the park.
- In total, 75% of respondents had visited this park before, whereas 25% had not visited previously.
- Users had visited an average of seven and a half times in the past 12 months. The highest proportion (18%) had visited the park just one time, with 17% visiting twice and another 17% visiting three to five times.
- Average group size was over five and a half people, but this average was skewed by a few extremely large groups. Groups most commonly consisted of two (26%), and three to four people (25%).
- In total, 30% of park users brought dogs with them and 70% did not bring dogs.
- Most users arrived at the park in their family's personal vehicle (90%), 4% arrived in somebody else's vehicle, and 6% arrived in another form of transportation. Bicycling, bus, motorcycle, and work vehicle were the most popular "other" ways people reached the park. On average, there were 2.66 people in each personal family vehicle, 4.13 people in somebody else's vehicle, and 4.67 people in other forms of transportation. For all day use vehicles, there was an average of 2.89 people in the vehicle.

- Most users (71%) considered this park as their main destination for recreational activities, whereas 8% of users indicated that this park was not their main destination for recreational activities. Another 13% of users indicated that their visit was a side trip and primarily for business, family, or other reasons.
- If they had been unable to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, most park visitors would have either gone somewhere else for the same activity (55%), stayed home (22%), or done something else (12%). Furthermore, if unable to visit the park, day users reported that they would have traveled almost 23 miles to participate in the same activity.
- If they had been unable to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, many day users would have gone to Alsea Falls BLM Recreation Area, Benton County's Adair Park, Champoeg State Park, E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Peavy Arboretum, Foster Reservoir, Mill Creek Park, Nesmith County Park, Silver Falls State Park, and City Parks (i.e., Corvallis, Monmouth, Dallas, Independence, Falls City).

#### ***Physical Activity and Other Health Benefits***

- Approximately 44% of day users indicated participating in moderate physical activity, while 10% indicated participating in vigorous physical activity. Visitors who indicated participating in moderate and vigorous physical activity spent an average of approximately 51 minutes participating in moderate physical activity and 54 minutes participating in vigorous physical activity.
- Half (50%) of all visitors indicated that their level of physical activity during their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site was about the same as their daily life, whereas 27% indicated it was less, and 23% indicated it was more.
- Park visitors reported their visit helped to reduce stress (82%), reduce anxiety (79%), and improve mental health (73%). Fewer users indicated that their visit improved their level of physical fitness (35%) or improved their physical health (46%).

#### ***Visitor Spending***

- Most visitors to the park are local (living 30 miles or less from the park).
- The majority of local day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (44%), \$26-\$50 (20%), or \$51-\$150 (20%), while the majority of non-local day users reported spending no money (22%), \$1-\$25 (19%), \$51-\$150 (19%), or \$151-\$350 (19%). The majority of all day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (38%) or \$51-\$150 (20%).
- Most local day-use visitor parties reported spending on gasoline and oil (74%), and groceries (54%). Most non-local day visitors reported spending money on gasoline and oil (65%). Overall, most visitors to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site reported spending some money on gasoline and oil (72%), and groceries (52%).
- Day users reported that they would spend no more than an average of about \$53 than they already spent before deciding not to visit the park. The largest percentage of day users (47%) would be willing to spend an additional \$1-\$25, with another 26% willing to spend \$26-\$50 more than they already spent.
- Approximately 7% of visitors were staying away from home within 30 miles of the park. Of those users staying away from home within 30 miles of the park, respondents indicated staying an average of over six and a half nights (6.64).

### ***Obtaining Information about the Parks***

- Almost all users (94%) were able to find the information they needed when planning their visit to this park, and the few (6%) who did not find it would like information on maps of the park, river access, and the address of park on website.
- The most heavily used sources of information were previous visits (79%), friends or family members (69%), highway signs (67%), and official internet websites (44%). The least used sources were health care providers (13%), videos / DVDs (13%), television (17%), and social media websites (19%). The most popular other ways users obtained information about the park was through word of mouth, maps, been visiting park for years, and event invitations (i.e., reunions, weddings).
- Official internet websites (e.g., Oregon State Parks, Travel Oregon; 37%), and friends or family members (31%) were the first primary sources used by most respondents to obtain information about the park. Few people used other sources when obtaining information.

### ***Satisfaction with Experiences and Conditions***

- Users considered the most important characteristics at this park were the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms (97%), and the absence of litter (94%). The least important attributes were the number and quality of information / education programs and materials (35% to 37%), number of park trails (57%), and the ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller; 60%).
- Overall satisfaction among users was extremely high, as 98% were satisfied with the highest proportion of users being “very satisfied” (63%). A small amount of respondents (2%) were dissatisfied.
- Users were most satisfied with the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), absence of litter (96%), courteousness of park rangers / personnel (93%), and the number and cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms (91% to 90%). Users were least satisfied with the number and quality of information / education programs or materials (49% to 51%), information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park (59%), and signs about directions within the park (64%).
- An Importance – Performance analysis showed that all park attributes were in the “keep up the good work” category, indicating that users thought that staff were doing a good job managing conditions and experiences. No attributes fell into the “concentrate here” quadrant.
- Most respondents were also extremely satisfied with the natural environment (99%), and the facilities and services (90%).
- Most respondents (96%) said they were likely to return to this park in the future.
- Almost all visitors (99%) to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site would recommend the park to their friends or family. Reasons respondents indicated they would not recommend the park were because there is not enough to do.
- The most commonly reported outstanding features and things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site involved: (a) barbecue and picnic areas; (b) cleanliness of park, sand, and water; (c) peace and quiet; (d) hiking; (e) openness and lack of crowds; (f) swimming and playing in the water; and (g) the natural beauty.
- Day users felt not at all crowded, with 14% of all park users feeling some degree of crowding on their visit. These results suggest that crowding in this park is in the

“suppressed crowding” range, and crowding is likely limited by management, situational factors, or natural factors and may offer unique low-density experiences.

### ***Attitudes About Programs and Management Strategies***

- Over half (52%) of day users would consider participating in a Let’s Go program. Programs with the most interest were camping (26%), canoeing (25%), stargazing (25%), and hiking (24%). The least supported Let’s Go programs were scenic bicycling on roads (13%), mountain biking (13%), geocaching (13%), rock climbing (14%), and disc golfing (14%). The most popular “other” programs visitors were interested in learning about were outdoor survival skills, plant identification, and swimming.
- Approximately 2% of day users indicated using a concession service or activity (e.g., fishing, rafting, bicycling, scenic or historic tour) while at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most popular concession service / activity were fishing, hiking, and rafting.
- Users most strongly supported management strategies designed to provide more opportunities for escaping crowds (74%), more opportunities for viewing wildlife (70%), not changing a thing about the park (68%), more recycling containers (64%), requiring all dogs be kept on leash at all times (59%), and more trash cans (58%). The least supported strategies were to close the park to all recreation and tourism activities (13%), provide food for sale (18%), limit the number of people allowed per day (20%), and provide downloadable mobile phone applications (23%).
- There was overall low support for service reductions in the park. The highest support was for returning the park to a natural area (17%), and fewer ranger patrols (16%). The least supported service reductions were for reduced janitorial services (7%), scaled down facilities (e.g., restrooms, shelters; 8%), and fewer hours open (9%).

### ***Sociodemographic Characteristics of Users***

- There were more female (55%) than male (45%) users at this park.
- The average age of users was approximately 46 years old, and the largest proportions of users were 60 to 69 years old (21%), 50 to 59 years old (17%), and 20 to 29 years old (17%).
- The average annual household income before taxes of respondents was approximately \$38,400, and the largest proportion of users had incomes from \$10,000 to \$29,999 (28%), \$30,000 to \$49,999 (20%), and \$50,000 to \$69,999 (20%). Visitors to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site appear generally less wealthy than the Oregon population at large (Oregon median household income in 2010 was \$51,994).
- Almost all respondents were white (i.e., Caucasian; 88%), with few American Indian or Alaskan Native (4%), Black or African American (3%), Hispanic / Latino (3%), and Asian (1%).
- Almost all respondents (96%) reported English as their primary language spoken in their homes.
- Approximately 92% of users resided in Oregon, 4% resided in Washington, and 4% resided in other states. Among users, 84% of park users resided in the Willamette Valley region of Oregon, 6% resided in the Coastal region, 3% resided in the Portland Metro region, and 1% resided in the Central region of the state. No respondents lived in the Southern, Eastern, or Mt Hood / Gorge regions of the state.

- In total, 75% of users said that nobody in their group had a disability, whereas 25% had at least one group member with a disability. Of those who had a disability, 22% was associated with walking, 8% with hearing, 6% with sight, and another 3% with learning.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Management Recommendations***

- Almost all day and overnight users traveled to this park in their own vehicles (89%), so adequate parking is important and should be considered in planning and management.
- Approximately 30% of users brought dogs with them to this park. Furthermore, 59% of all visitors supported requiring dogs be on leash at all times and only 39% supported making the park more pet friendly. Managers may want to consider examining enforcement of existing pet regulations in the park.
- A majority of all users (98%) were satisfied with their experiences and the conditions at this park. Satisfaction, however, was consistently lower for the amount (49%), and quality (51%) of information and education materials and programs. Managers may wish to evaluate these services to users to ensure they are meeting visitor needs.
- Given that over 30% of park visitors were over the age of 60 and 25% of users had disabilities (22% with disabilities related to walking), managers may want to consider evaluating access throughout the park and perhaps even obtaining a current ADA or related audit.
- Approximately 14% of day users felt crowded at the park. These results suggest that crowding in this park is in the “suppressed crowding” range, and crowding is likely limited by management, situational factors, or natural factors and may offer unique low-density experiences.
- Users most strongly supported strategies designed to provide more opportunities for escaping crowds (74%), more opportunities for viewing wildlife (70%), not changing a thing about the park (68%), more recycling containers (64%), requiring all dogs be kept on leash at all times (59%), and more trash cans (58%). Managers may want to consider some or all of these strategies.
- An Importance – Performance analysis showed that all park attributes were in the “keep up the good work” category, indicating that users thought that staff were doing a good job managing conditions and experiences.
- The largest proportion of users depended on official internet websites (37%) as the first primary source of obtaining information about parks such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Given these findings, it is imperative for staff to ensure that agency and park internet websites are easy to navigate, up to date, and provide comprehensive information.
- Almost all park visitors (94%) were able to find the information they needed when planning their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. However, some visitors (6%) were not able to find all information needed. The most popular information needed was further information about maps of the park, river access, and the address of park on website.
- Users also provided 181 verbatim open ended comments on what they found to be the most outstanding features or things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most common outstanding features and things to do involved: (a) barbecue and picnic areas; (b) cleanliness of park, sand, and water; (c) peace and quiet; (d) hiking; (e)

openness and lack of crowds; (f) swimming and playing in the water; and (g) the natural beauty. This information could be added to the Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site website to inform future visitors regarding what other visitors feel are the most outstanding features at the park.

- Users provided 106 verbatim open ended positive and negative comments, and suggestions for possible improvement of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site and other park related issues. The most common concerns raised involved: (a) play structures for children; (b) easier and more access to the river and beach; (c) easier and safer access to bathrooms and picnic areas for wheelchairs, elderly, and strollers; (d) bicycle racks; (e) quantity of facilities (barbecue grills, trash cans, tables, benches, restrooms); (f) adding a disc golf course; (g) litter on beach; (h) smoking ban; (i) off leash dogs; and (j) maintaining natural setting.

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## ***INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES***

The Oregon State Parks system provides public access to a collection of the state’s outstanding natural, cultural, scenic, and outdoor recreation resources. Understanding the opinions of park users regarding issues such as the quality of facilities, recreational opportunities, social and resource conditions, and how they use these parks is critical to providing effective facilities, programs, and services. Project objectives were to describe day user activities, demographic characteristics, and opinions about conditions and management at this park and provide recommendations for maintaining or improving conditions at this park.

## ***METHODS***

Data were obtained from questionnaires (see Appendix B) administered to randomly selected sample of day users at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site between July and September 2013. An on-site (face to face) survey method was used. A respondent was only allowed one opportunity to complete a questionnaire.

### **Onsite Survey of Day Users**

Day users 18 years of age and older who visited Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site between July 4 and September 22, 2013 were approached in person (face to face) and asked to complete the seven page questionnaire onsite at this park. Day users were asked if they would be willing to complete the questionnaire and asked to immediately complete and return the full length questionnaire onsite. Questionnaires were printed on both sides of two legal sized (8 ½ x 14) pages and folded into a small booklet, and took most respondents approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Respondents were provided with a clipboard and pen to complete the questionnaire. A number of volunteers (e.g., Camp Hosts) administered these questionnaires to reduce costs.

### **Sample Sizes and Response Rates**

As shown in Table 1, the total number of completed questionnaires was  $n = 227$  with an estimated total response rate of 82%.

Table 1. Sample sizes and response rates

	Initial contacts	Completed surveys ( <i>n</i> )	Response rate (%)
Day Users	277	227	82

The sample size allows generalizations about the population of day users at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site at a margin of  $\pm 6.5\%$ , at the 95% confidence level.

Questionnaires included questions on a range of topics such as prior visitation, activity participation, visitor spending, satisfaction, support of management, and demographic characteristics. To highlight key findings, data were often recoded into major response categories (e.g., agree, disagree; support, oppose), but basic descriptive findings of uncollapsed questions (i.e., strongly, slightly agree) are provided in Appendix C.

## RESULTS

### Personal and Visit Characteristics

**Activity Groups.** The questionnaires asked respondents to check all of the activities in which they participated at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on their most recent trip. Table 2 shows that the most popular activities at this park were picnicking or barbecuing (63%), hiking or walking (47%), and swimming / wading (37%). The least popular activities were running or jogging (5%), fishing (7%), and bicycling on local roads (7%).

Table 2. Day user recreation activities at the park

Activity	Participation (%) <sup>a</sup>
Picnicking or barbecuing	63
Hiking or walking	47
Swimming / wading	37
Sightseeing	34
Dog walking	24
Other	23
Outdoor photography	20
Bird or wildlife watching	19
Bicycling on local roads	7
Fishing	7
Running or jogging	5

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who reported participating in the activity at the park on their most recent visit. Percentages do not sum to 100% because respondents could check more than one activity from the list.

<sup>c</sup> The most popular “other” activities were: special events (family reunions, birthday and anniversary parties), rest stop, kids playing in park, resting, soccer, Frisbee, lunch break.

Respondents were then asked to specify the one primary activity in which they participated most often during their recent visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Table 3 shows that the most common primary activity groups were picnicking or barbecuing (41%), and swimming /

wading (22%). The least common activity groups were fishing (1%), bird or wildlife watching (1%), and bicycling on local roads (1%).

Table 3. Primary day-use activities at the park

Activity	Day Users (%)
Picnicking or barbecuing	41
Swimming / wading	22
Other	18
Hiking or walking	9
Sightseeing	4
Dog walking	2
Outdoor photography	2
Bicycling on local roads	1
Bird or wildlife watching	1
Fishing	1

**Duration of Visit.** Day users were asked to report how many *hours* they spent at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on their recent trip. Table 4 shows that, on average, day users spent almost three hours in the park, with 66% of users spending up to three hours in the park. The majority of day users spent either one hour (27%), or four to five hours (27%) in the park.

Table 4. Duration of visit at the park <sup>a</sup>

1 hour	27
2 hours	20
3 hours	19
4 to 5 hours	27
6 to 9 hours	7
10 or more hours	0
Mean / average hours	2.86

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) unless specified as means / averages

**Distance Traveled.** Respondents were also asked to report about how far from home they traveled to get to the park. Table 5 shows that 77% of visitors were local (driving 30 miles or less to reach the park) and another 13% originated 31 to 60 miles from the park. Only 10% of respondents traveled over 60 miles to reach the park. Day users, on average, traveled approximately 29 miles to visit the park.

Table 5. Day user distance traveled to the park <sup>a</sup>

30 miles or less	77
31 to 60 miles	13
61 to 90 miles	4
91 to 120 miles	1
121 to 150 miles	0
151 to 250 miles	2
251 to 500 miles	1
501 or more miles	2
Mean / average	29.19

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) unless specified as means / averages

**Previous Visitation.** Users were asked if they had ever visited Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site before their most recent trip. Table 6 shows that 75% of respondents had visited this park before, whereas 25% had not visited previously.

Table 6. Day user previous visitation to the park

	Day Users (%)
Yes, visited park before	75
No, not visited park before	25

Users who had previously visited this park were then asked how many trips they had made to this park in the past 12 months. Table 7 shows that users had visited an average of seven and a half times in the past 12 months. The highest proportion (18%) had visited the park just one time, with 17% visiting twice, and another 17% visiting three to five times. Only 16% of day users had never visited the park before, whereas 33% had visited the park over 6 times in the past 12 months.

Table 7. Day user number of previous visits to the park in the last 12 months <sup>a</sup>

	Day Users (%)
0 Trips	16
1 Trip	18
2 Trips	17
3 to 5 Trips	17
6 to 12 Trips	16
13 to 24 Trips	10
More than 24 Trips	7
Mean / average trips <sup>c</sup>	7.52

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) unless specified as means / average

**Group Size.** Respondents were asked to report how many people, including themselves, accompanied them at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on their most recent trip. Table 8 shows that the average group size was over five and a half people. Groups most commonly consisted of two (26%), and three or four people (25%).

Table 8. Day user group size at the park <sup>a</sup>

	Day Users (%)
1 person (alone)	19
2 people	26
3 or 4 people	25
5 to 10 people	17
11 to 25 people	10
More than 25 people	4
Mean / average	5.60

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) unless specified as means / average

**Bringing Dogs to the Park.** The questionnaires asked respondents if they or anyone else in their group brought dog(s) with them to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Table 9 shows that 30% of park users brought dogs with them and 70% did not bring dogs.

Table 9. Day users bringing dogs with them to the park

	Day Users (%)
No, did not bring dog(s)	70
Yes, brought dog(s)	30

**Transportation to the Park.** Respondents were asked how they got to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on their most recent trip. Table 10 shows that the majority of all users arrived at the park in their family’s personal vehicle (90%), 4% arrived in somebody else’s vehicle, and 6% arrived in another form of transportation. Bicycling, bus, motorcycle, and work vehicle were the most popular “other” ways people reached the park. On average, there were 2.66 people in each personal family vehicle, 4.13 people in somebody else’s vehicle, and 4.67 people in other forms of transportation. For all day use vehicles, there was an average of 2.89 people in the vehicle.

Table 10. Day user transportation to the park

	Day Users (%)
My family’s personal vehicle <sup>a</sup>	90
Somebody else’s personal vehicle <sup>b</sup>	4
Other <sup>c</sup>	6

<sup>a</sup> Number of people in vehicle: mean / average = 2.66

<sup>b</sup> Number of people in vehicle: mean / average = 4.13

<sup>c</sup> Number of people in vehicle: mean / average = 4.67

**Reasons for Visiting.** Visitors were asked if this park was the main reason for their trip. Table 11 shows that 71% of users considered this park as their main destination for recreational activities, whereas 8% of users indicated that this park was not their main destination for recreational activities. Another 13% of users indicated that their visit was a side trip and primarily for business, family, or other reasons.

Table 11. Day users in whether the park was their main destination

	Day Users (%)
Primarily for recreation – this park was main destination	71
Primarily for recreation – main destination was not this park	8
Primarily for business, family, or other reasons – park was side trip	13
Some other reason	8

**Alternatives to Visit.** Respondents were then asked what things they would have considered doing if they were not able to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit. As shown in Table 12, most users responded that, if unable to go to the park for this visit, they would have either gone somewhere else for the same activity (55%), stayed home (22%), or done something

else (12%). Furthermore, if unable to visit the park, day users reported that they would have traveled almost 23 miles to participate in the same activity.

Table 12. Day user alternatives to park visit

	Day Users (%)
Gone somewhere else for same activity <sup>a</sup>	55
Stayed home	22
Something else (none of these)	12
Come back another time	8
Gone somewhere else for a different activity <sup>b</sup>	3
Gone to work at my regular job	0

<sup>a</sup> If gone somewhere else for same activity, how far from home is the place you would have gone instead: mean / average = 22.70 miles.

<sup>b</sup> If gone somewhere else for different activity, how far from home is the place you would have gone instead: mean / average = N/A miles.

Respondents were also asked to specify what other park they would consider going to if they had not been able to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Many users indicated that they would visit Alsea Falls BLM Recreation Area, Benton County’s Adair Park, Champoeg State Park, E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Peavy Arboretum, Foster Reservoir, Mill Creek Park, Nesmith County Park, Silver Falls State Park, and City Parks (i.e., Corvallis, Monmouth, Dallas, Independence, Falls City).

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- The most popular activities were picnicking or barbecuing (63%), hiking or walking (47%), and swimming / wading (37%). The least popular activities were running or jogging (5%), fishing (7%), and bicycling on local roads (7%).
- The most common main activity groups were picnicking or barbecuing (41%) and swimming / wading (22%). The least common activity groups were fishing (1%), bird or wildlife watching (1%), and bicycling on local roads (1%).
- Day users spent an average of almost three hours in the park, with 66% of users spending up to three hours in the park. The majority of day users spent either one hour (27%), or four to five hours (27%) in the park.
- Many visitors were local with 77% living within 30 miles from the park, and another 13% originating 31 to 60 miles from the park. Only 10% of respondents traveled over 60

miles to reach the park. Day users, on average, traveled approximately 29 miles to visit the park.

- In total, 75% of respondents had visited this park before, whereas 25% had not visited previously.
- Users had visited an average of seven and a half times in the past 12 months. The highest proportion (18%) had visited the park just one time, with 17% visiting twice and another 17% visiting three to five times.
- Average group size was over five and a half people, but this average was skewed by a few extremely large groups. Groups most commonly consisted of two (26%), and three to four people (25%).
- In total, 30% of park users brought dogs with them and 70% did not bring dogs.
- Most users arrived at the park in their family's personal vehicle (90%), 4% arrived in somebody else's vehicle, and 6% arrived in another form of transportation. Bicycling, bus, motorcycle, and work vehicle were the most popular "other" ways people reached the park. On average, there were 2.66 people in each personal family vehicle, 4.13 people in somebody else's vehicle, and 4.67 people in other forms of transportation. For all day use vehicles, there was an average of 2.89 people in the vehicle.
- Most users (71%) considered this park as their main destination for recreational activities, whereas 8% of users indicated that this park was not their main destination for recreational activities. Another 13% of users indicated that their visit was a side trip and primarily for business, family, or other reasons.
- If they had been unable to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, most park visitors would have either gone somewhere else for the same activity (55%), stayed home (22%), or done something else (12%). Furthermore, if unable to visit the park, day users reported that they would have traveled almost 23 miles to participate in the same activity.
- If they had been unable to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, many day users would have gone to Alesa Falls BLM Recreation Area, Benton County's Adair Park, Champoeg State Park, E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Peavy Arboretum, Foster

Reservoir, Mill Creek Park, Nesmith County Park, Silver Falls State Park, and City Parks (i.e., Corvallis, Monmouth, Dallas, Independence, Falls City).

**Physical Activity and Other Health Benefits**

Day users were asked their extent of participation in moderate physical activity (e.g., walking, bicycling, canoeing at a moderate pace), and vigorous physical activity (e.g., jogging, walking, or bicycling at a vigorous pace, breaking a sweat, heart beating rapidly) during their trip to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site (Table 13). Approximately 44% of day users indicated participating in moderate physical activity, while 10% indicated participating in vigorous physical activity. Visitors who indicated participating in moderate and vigorous physical activity spent an average of approximately 51 minutes participating in moderate physical activity and 54 minutes participating in vigorous physical activity.

Table 13. Day user participation in moderate and vigorous physical activity during visit <sup>a</sup>

Moderate Physical Activity	
No	56
Yes	44
Avg (min)	51.10
Vigorous Physical Activity	
No	90
Yes	10
Avg (min)	54.29

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who reported participating in physical activity unless otherwise specified as average minutes participating in moderate or vigorous physical activity.

Furthermore, 50% of all visitors indicated that their level of physical activity during their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site was about the same as their daily life, whereas 27% indicated it was less, and 23% indicated it was more (Table 14).

Table 14. Comparison of day user level of physical activity at park to daily life

	Day Users (%)
Physical activity ABOUT THE SAME as daily life	50
Physical activity LESS than daily life	27
Physical activity MORE than daily life	23

Park visitors were asked to rate the degree that their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site had improved their mental and physical health. Table 15 shows that, overall, park visitors reported their visit helped to reduce stress (82%), reduce anxiety (79%), and improve mental

health (73%). Fewer users indicated that their visit improved their level of physical fitness (35%) or improved their physical health (46%).

Table 15. Day user physical and mental health benefits related to park visitation

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Reducing stress	82
Reducing anxiety	79
Improving mental health	73
Improving physical health	46
Improving level of physical fitness	35

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who reported benefiting “much” or “a great deal” from visit to park.

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- Approximately 44% of day users indicated participating in moderate physical activity, while 10% indicated participating in vigorous physical activity. Visitors who indicated participating in moderate and vigorous physical activity spent an average of approximately 51 minutes participating in moderate physical activity and 54 minutes participating in vigorous physical activity.
- Half (50%) of all visitors indicated that their level of physical activity during their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site was about the same as their daily life, whereas 27% indicated it was less, and 23% indicated it was more.
- Park visitors reported their visit helped to reduce stress (82%), reduce anxiety (79%), and improve mental health (73%). Fewer users indicated that their visit improved their level of physical fitness (35%) or improved their physical health (46%).

### Visitor Spending

Park visitors were asked to estimate how much they and the other members of their party spent on their trip within 30 miles of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on eight spending categories. The information included in this section of the report summarizes basic visitor spending results from the survey. A more extensive visitor spending analysis will be conducted by Oregon State University and available in a separate report.

For this analysis, “local” visitors are defined as those visitors reporting traveling 30 miles or less from home to get to the park. “Non-local” visitors are those respondents living 31 or more miles

from the park. All foreign visitors were classified as “non-local” visitors. Visitor responses were excluded under the following conditions:

- The number of nights spent away from home in the local area was greater than 30,
- The reported size of the group was greater than 10 individuals,
- Spending per day/night was greater or equal to \$500 or spending on recreation and equipment rental was greater or equal to \$500 in total.

Table 16 includes the percentages of all park day users that are local and non-local visitors. Most visitors to the park are local (living 30 miles or less from the park).

Table 16. Day users, local / non-local

	Day Users (%)
Local	78
Non-Local	22

Table 17 shows the proportion of total spending for local and non-local day users and reported on a party trip basis. The majority of local day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (44%), \$26-\$50 (20%), or \$51-\$150 (20%), while the majority of non-local day users reported spending no money (22%), \$1-\$25 (19%), \$51-\$150 (19%), or \$151-\$350 (19%). The majority of all day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (38%) or \$51-\$150 (20%).

Table 17. Local and non-local day user total local spending in dollars per party per trip

	Local (%)	Non-local (%)	All (%)
Spent no money	11	22	14
\$1 - \$25	44	19	38
\$26 - \$50	20	15	19
\$51 - \$150	20	19	20
\$151 - \$350	5	19	8
\$351 - \$500	0	7	2

Table 18 includes the proportion of visitor parties that reported spending any dollars on the eight spending categories (e.g., motel, camping, restaurants and bars, groceries, etc.). For local day use visitors, most reported spending some money on gasoline and oil (74%), and groceries (54%). Most non-local day visitors reported spending money on gasoline and oil (65%). Overall, most

visitors to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site reported spending some money on gasoline and oil (72%), and groceries (52%).

Table 18. Local and non-local day user party spending of any dollars in eight spending categories

Spending Categories	Local (%)	Non-local (%)	All (%)
Gasoline and oil	74	65	72
Groceries	54	46	52
Restaurants and bars	32	25	30
Souvenirs, clothing, and other miscellaneous	6	14	8
Recreation and equipment (guide fees, equipment rental)	6	4	5
Motel, lodge, cabin, B&B, other lodging	6	14	9
Park entry, parking, or recreation use fees	9	14	10
Camping	5	7	6

Visitors indicated that they would spend no more than an average of about \$53 than they already spent at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site before they would consider not taking the trip (Table 19). The highest percentage of day users (47%) would be willing to spend an additional \$1-\$25, with another 26% willing to spend \$26-\$50 more than they already spent.

Table 19. Day user additional spending before deciding not to visit

	Day Users (%)
No more than already spent	3
\$1 - \$25	47
\$26 - \$50	26
\$51 - \$150	19
\$151 - \$350	3
\$351 - \$550	2
\$551 – and up	0
Avg (\$)	53.36

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were staying away from home within 30 miles of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site, and the number of nights they were staying if they were. Table 20 shows that 7% of visitors were staying away from home within 30 miles of the park. Of those users staying away from home within 30 miles of the park, respondents indicated staying an average of over six and a half nights (6.64).

Table 20. Day user nights staying away from home within 30 miles of park

	Day Users
Staying away from home <sup>a</sup>	7
Mean number of nights <sup>b</sup>	6.64

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries in this row are percentages (%) of visitors staying away from home within 30 miles.

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries in this row are mean (avg) nights staying away from home within 30 miles.

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- Most visitors to the park are local (living 30 miles or less from the park).
- The majority of local day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (44%), \$26-\$50 (20%), or \$51-\$150 (20%), while the majority of non-local day users reported spending no money (22%), \$1-\$25 (19%), \$51-\$150 (19%), or \$151-\$350 (19%). The majority of all day users reported spending \$1-\$25 (38%) or \$51-\$150 (20%).
- Most local day-use visitor parties reported spending on gasoline and oil (74%), and groceries (54%). Most non-local day visitors reported spending money on gasoline and oil (65%). Overall, most visitors to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site reported spending some money on gasoline and oil (72%), and groceries (52%).
- Day users reported that they would spend no more than an average of about \$53 than they already spent before deciding not to visit the park. The largest percentage of day users (47%) would be willing to spend an additional \$1-\$25, with another 26% willing to spend \$26-\$50 more than they already spent.
- Approximately 7% of visitors were staying away from home within 30 miles of the park. Of those users staying away from home within 30 miles of the park, respondents indicated staying an average of over six and a half nights (6.64).

**Obtaining Information about the Parks**

The questionnaires contained several questions examining how users obtained information about state parks such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site and whether they were able to obtain the information they needed. Table 21 shows that almost all users (94%) were able to find the information they needed when planning their visit to this park, and the few (6%) who did not

find the information they needed would like further information on: maps of the park, river access, and the address of park on website.

Table 21. Whether day users found the information needed about the park

	Day Users (%)
Yes, found the information needed	94
No, did not find the information needed <sup>a</sup>	6

<sup>a</sup> The most popular information needed was: map of park, river access, and the address of park on website.

Respondents were also presented with a list of 16 possible sources for finding information and asked how often they obtained information from these sources when thinking about visiting a park such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Table 22 shows that the most heavily used sources of information were previous visits (79%), friends or family members (69%), highway signs (67%), and official internet websites (44%). The least used sources were health care providers (13%), videos / DVDs (13%), television (17%), and social media websites (19%). The most popular other ways users obtained information about the park was through word of mouth, maps, been visiting park for years, and event invitations (i.e., reunions, weddings).

Table 22. Day user use of information sources

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Previous visit	79
Friends or family members	69
Highway signs	67
Official internet websites	44
Other <sup>b</sup>	30
Brochures	29
Newspapers	25
Community organization or church	22
Work	22
Magazines	21
Books	20
Radio	20
Social media websites	19
Television	17
Videos / DVDs	13
Health care providers	13

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who used the information source “sometimes” to “often.”

<sup>b</sup> The most popular “other” ways were: word of mouth, map, been visiting for years, and event invitations (reunions, parties).

Respondents were then asked to specify from this list of information sources what one source they would first use when obtaining information about a park such as Sarah Helmick State

Recreation Site. Table 23 shows that official internet websites (e.g., Oregon State Parks, Travel Oregon; 37%), and friends or family members (31%) were the first primary sources used by most respondents. Few people used other sources when obtaining information.

Table 23. Day user’s primary information sources

	Day Users (%)
Official internet websites	37
Friends or family members	31
Highway signs	10
Previous visit	10
Brochures	4
Other	4
Social media websites	2
Newspapers	1
Television	1
Community organization or church	1

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- Almost all users (94%) were able to find the information they needed when planning their visit to this park, and the few (6%) who did not find it would like information on maps of the park, river access, and the address of park on website.
- The most heavily used sources of information were previous visits (79%), friends or family members (69%), highway signs (67%), and official internet websites (44%). The least used sources were health care providers (13%), videos / DVDs (13%), television (17%), and social media websites (19%). The most popular other ways users obtained information about the park was through word of mouth, maps, been visiting park for years, and event invitations (i.e., reunions, weddings).
- Official internet websites (e.g., Oregon State Parks, Travel Oregon; 37%), and friends or family members (31%) were the first primary sources used by most respondents to obtain information about the park. Few people used other sources when obtaining information.

**Satisfaction with Experiences and Conditions**

**Overall Satisfaction.** Respondents were asked “overall, how dissatisfied or satisfied were you with your *overall experience* at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site?” Table 24 shows that overall satisfaction was extremely high, as 98% were satisfied and a small amount of

respondents (2%) were dissatisfied. In addition, the highest proportion of users was “very satisfied” (63%).

Table 24. Day user overall satisfaction

	Day Users (%)
Very Satisfied	63
Satisfied	35
Dissatisfied or Neutral	2

**Satisfaction and Expectations with Specific Characteristics.** Although almost all users were satisfied with their overall visit at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site, this does not indicate that they were satisfied with every aspect of this park. This project, therefore, first measured respondent *expectations* by asking them the extent they believed that several attributes of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site were *important* to their visit (e.g., absence of litter, personal safety, signs, parking). Then, respondents reported their *satisfaction* of these same attributes at this park to measure *performance* of these attributes.

Table 25. Day user specific *expectations* at the park

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care)	97
Cleanliness / conditions or toilets / bathrooms	97
Absence of litter	94
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel	89
Number of toilets / bathrooms	88
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people	87
Personal safety	86
Parking for vehicles	82
Presence of park rangers / personnel	70
Facilities for groups to gather	68
Signs about directions to the park	67
Signs about directions within the park	65
Conditions / maintenance of park trails	63
Variety of things to do	62
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park	62
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller)	60
Number of park trails	57
Quality of information / education programs or materials	37
Number of information / education programs or materials	35

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who rated the characteristic as “somewhat” or “extremely important.”

Table 25 shows that the most important characteristics about the park were the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms (97%), and the absence of litter (94%). The least important attributes were the number and quality of information / education programs and materials (35% to 37%), number of park trails (57%), and the ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller; 60%).

Table 26 shows that the majority of users were satisfied with most of these characteristics at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Users were most satisfied with the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), absence of litter (96%), courteousness of park rangers / personnel (93%), and the number and cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms (91% to 90%). Users were least satisfied with the number and quality of information / education programs or materials (49% to 51%), information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park (59%), and signs about directions within the park (64%).

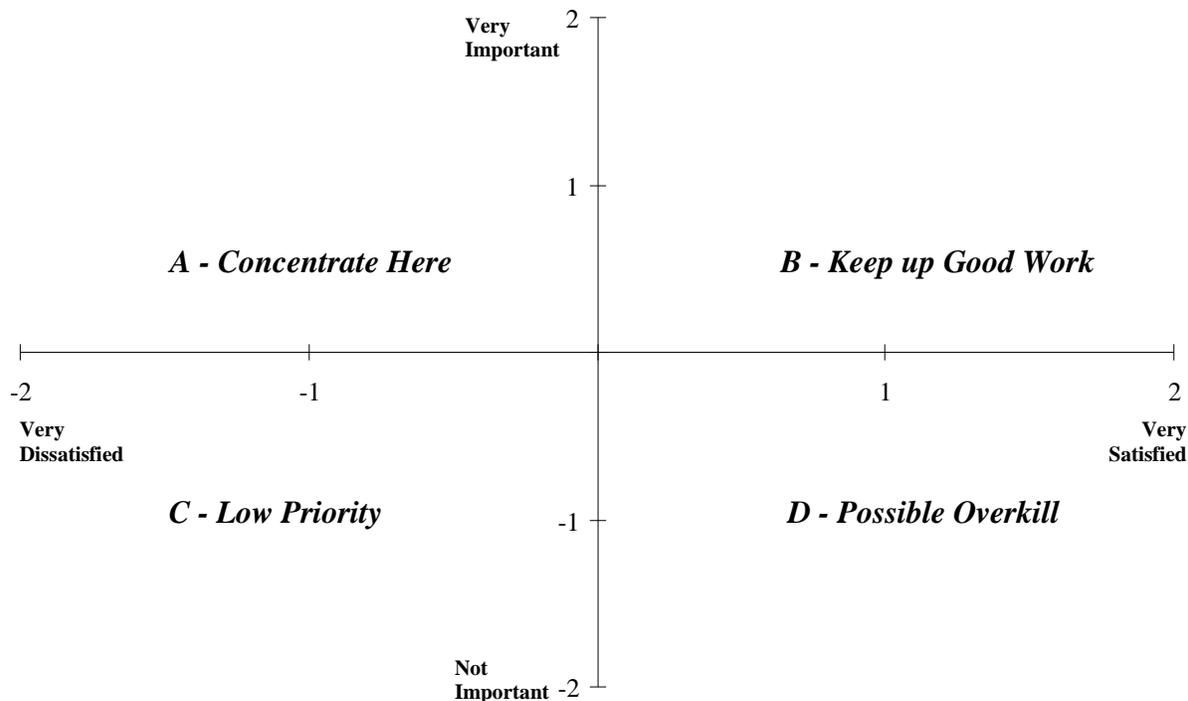
Table 26. Day user specific *satisfactions* at the park

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care)	97
Absence of litter	96
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel	93
Number of toilets / bathrooms	91
Cleanliness / conditions or toilets / bathrooms	90
Presence of park rangers / personnel	87
Personal safety	87
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people	86
Parking for vehicles	86
Facilities for groups to gather	74
Signs about directions to the park	74
Conditions / maintenance of park trails	73
Variety of things to do	72
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller)	68
Number of park trails	67
Signs about directions within the park	64
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park	59
Quality of information / education programs or materials	51
Number of information / education programs or materials	49

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who rated the characteristic as “satisfied” or “very satisfied.”

**Importance – Performance Analysis.**

Figure 1. Importance-performance (I-P) analysis matrix



One approach for visualizing relationships between expectations (i.e., importance of attributes) and satisfaction (i.e., performance of these attributes) is Importance – Performance (I-P) analysis (Figure 1). Importance or expectations are represented as averages (i.e., means) on the vertical axis (i.e., y-axis) and average performance or experiences (i.e., satisfaction) are measured on the horizontal axis (i.e., x-axis). When combined, these axes intersect and produce a matrix of four quadrants that can be interpreted as “concentrate here” (high importance or expectation, low satisfaction or poor experiences; Quadrant A), “keep up the good work” (high importance or expectation and high satisfaction or good experiences; Quadrant B), “low priority” (low importance or expectation and low satisfaction or poor experiences; Quadrant C), and “possible overkill” (low importance or expectation, high satisfaction or good experiences; Quadrant D). This matrix provides managers with an easily understandable picture of the status of services, facilities, and conditions as perceived by users, and reveals conditions that may or may not need attention (Bruyere, Rodriguez, & Vaske, 2002; Vaske, Beaman, Stanley, & Grenier, 1996).

Figure 2. Importance-performance (I-P) analysis matrix for day users

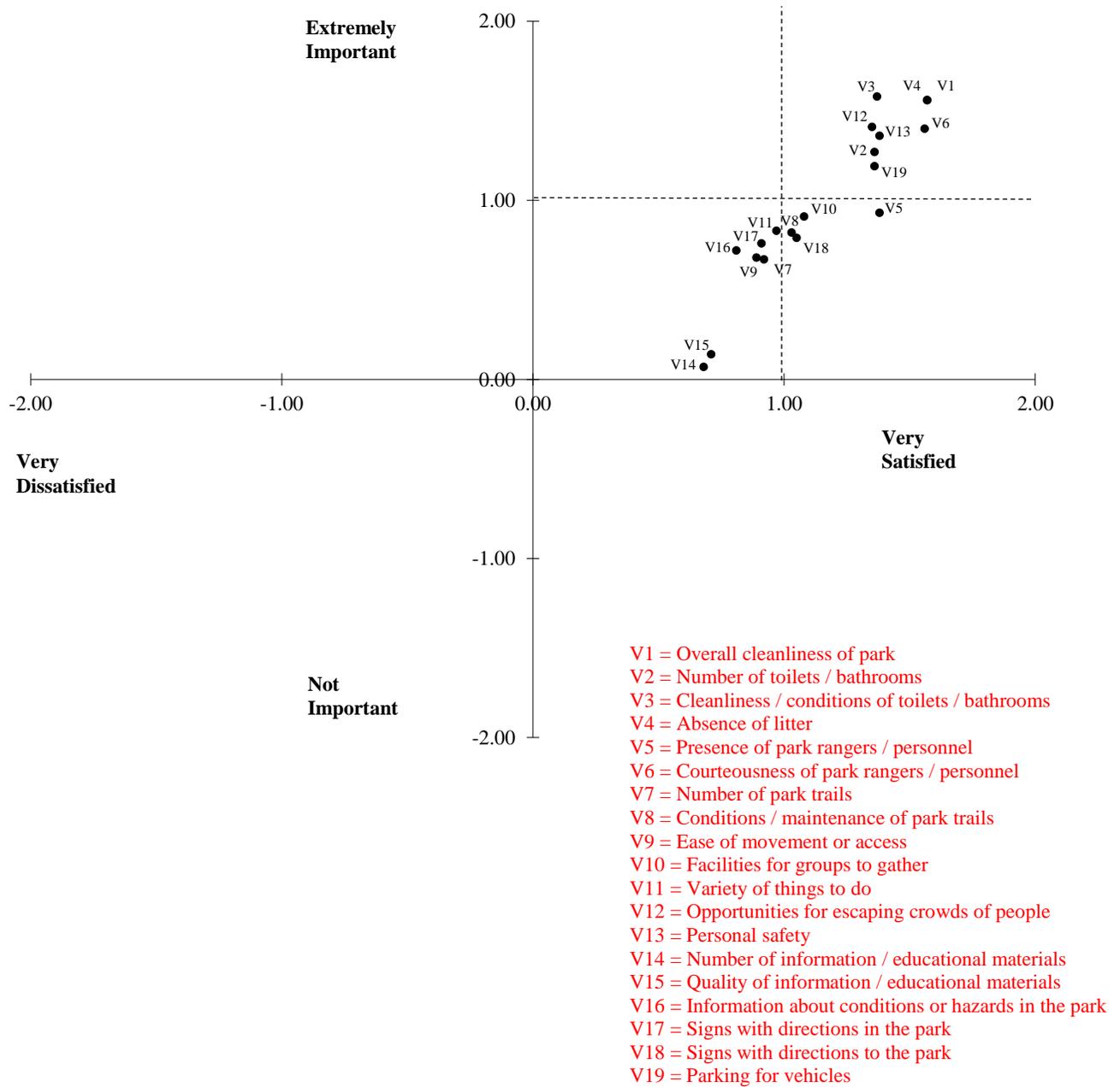


Figure 2 is the I-P matrix for day users. The matrix shows that all attributes were in the “keep up the good work” quadrant, indicating that users thought that park staff were doing a good job managing conditions and experiences at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. For this state park visitor survey project, we are also taking a closer examination of I-P scores in the “keep up the

good work” quadrant within the dashed lines included in Figures 2. These results show that there were no attributes that fell into the “concentrate here” quadrant.

Respondents were asked several additional questions about their satisfaction with Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site, including this park’s natural environment, facilities and services, and fees. Users were also asked how likely they would return to this state park. Table 27 shows extremely high user satisfaction with the natural environment (99%), and the facilities and services (90%). In total, 96% of respondents said they were likely to return to this park in the future.

Table 27. Day user likelihood of returning and satisfaction with the park facilities and environment

	Day Users (%)
Satisfaction with natural environment <sup>a</sup>	99
Satisfaction with facilities and services <sup>a</sup>	90
Likelihood of returning <sup>b</sup>	96

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who rated the characteristic as “satisfied” or “very satisfied.”

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who said they were “likely” or “very likely” to return to the park in the future.

Table 28 shows that all almost all visitors (99%) to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site would recommend the park to their friends or family. Reasons respondents indicated they would not recommend the park were because there is not enough to do.

Table 28. Day user recommendation of park to friends and family

	Day Users (%)
Yes, recommend park	99
No, would not recommend park	1

**Outstanding Features.** Users also provided 181 verbatim open ended comments on what they found to be the most outstanding features or things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most common outstanding features or things to do involved: (a) barbecue and picnic areas; (b) cleanliness of park, sand, and water; (c) peace and quiet; (d) hiking; (e) openness and lack of crowds; (f) swimming and playing in the water; and (g) the natural beauty.

**Perceived Crowding.** *Perceived crowding* is a subjective and negative evaluation that this reported number of encounters or people observed in an area is too many. Research suggests that when users perceived an area to be crowded, they likely encountered more than their maximum acceptance (i.e., their norm) of impacts (e.g., use levels) for the particular setting (Manning, 2010; Needham & Rollins, 2009).

Table 29 shows that, on average, day users felt not at all crowded. More specifically, only 14% of all park users felt some degree of crowding on their visit. According to Shelby, Vaske, and Heberlein (1989), and Vaske and Shelby (2008), these results suggest that crowding in this park is in the “suppressed crowding” range, and crowding is likely limited by management, situational factors, or natural factors and may offer unique low-density experiences.

Table 29. Day user crowding evaluations

	Day Users
Perception of crowding <sup>a</sup>	1.66
Reported feeling crowded (%)	14

<sup>a</sup> Mean on 9 point crowding scale of 1-2 “not at all crowded” to 3-4 “slightly crowded” to 5-7 “moderately crowded” to 8-9 “extremely crowded.” (Median = 1, Mode = 1).

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- Users considered the most important characteristics at this park were the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms (97%), and the absence of litter (94%). The least important attributes were the number and quality of information / education programs and materials (35% to 37%), number of park trails (57%), and the ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller; 60%).
- Overall satisfaction among users was extremely high, as 98% were satisfied with the highest proportion of users being “very satisfied” (63%). A small amount of respondents (2%) were dissatisfied.
- Users were most satisfied with the overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care; 97%), absence of litter (96%), courteousness of park rangers / personnel (93%), and the number and cleanliness of toilets / bathrooms (91% to 90%). Users were least satisfied with the number and quality of information / education programs or materials (49% to 51%), information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park (59%), and signs about directions within the park (64%).
- An Importance – Performance analysis showed that all park attributes were in the “keep up the good work” category, indicating that users thought that staff were doing a good job managing conditions and experiences. No attributes fell into the “concentrate here” quadrant.

- Most respondents were also extremely satisfied with the natural environment (99%), and the facilities and services (90%).
- Most respondents (96%) said they were likely to return to this park in the future.
- Almost all visitors (99%) to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site would recommend the park to their friends or family. Reasons respondents indicated they would not recommend the park were because there is not enough to do.
- The most commonly reported outstanding features and things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site involved: (a) barbecue and picnic areas; (b) cleanliness of park, sand, and water; (c) peace and quiet; (d) hiking; (e) openness and lack of crowds; (f) swimming and playing in the water; and (g) the natural beauty.
- Day users felt not at all crowded, with 14% of all park users feeling some degree of crowding on their visit. These results suggest that crowding in this park is in the “suppressed crowding” range, and crowding is likely limited by management, situational factors, or natural factors and may offer unique low-density experiences.

### **Attitudes About Programs and Management Strategies**

*Let's Go Program Interest.* The questionnaires asked respondents to indicate if they, or their family members, would consider participating in a weekend program (i.e., Let's Go program) for beginners to learn basic outdoor skills and to identify all of the skills they would be interested in learning about. Table 30 indicates that over half (52%) of all day users would consider participating in such a program at a nearby park. From those who indicated overall interest in Let's Go programs, the most popular programs were camping (26%), canoeing (25%), stargazing (25%), and hiking (24%). The least supported Let's Go programs were scenic bicycling on roads (13%), mountain biking (13%), geocaching (13%), rock climbing (14%), and disc golfing (14%). The most popular “other” programs visitors were interested in learning about were outdoor survival skills, plant identification, and swimming.

Table 30. Day user consideration of participating in “Let’s Go” programs

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Overall Interest	
Yes	52
Specific Program Interest	
Camping	26
Canoeing	25
Stargazing	25
Hiking	24
Fishing	23
Horseback riding	21
Rafting	20
Birding	19
Kayaking	19
Disc golfing	14
Rock climbing	14
Geocaching	13
Mountain biking	13
Scenic bicycling on roads	13
Other <sup>b</sup>	5

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users who reported interest in “Let’s Go” programs.

Percentages do not sum to 100% because respondents could check more than one program from the list.

<sup>b</sup> The most popular “other” programs were: outdoor survival skills, plant identification, and swimming.

Respondents were also asked if they, or members of their group, participated in any concession service / activity such as a guided tour (e.g., fishing, rafting, bicycling, scenic, historic) or equipment rental (e.g., kayak, bicycle). Table 31 shows that 2% of day users utilized a concession service or activity while at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most popular concession services / activities were fishing, hiking, and rafting.

Table 31 Day user participation in concession services/activities

	Day Users (%)
Utilized a concession service/activity <sup>a</sup>	2
Did not utilize a concession service/activity	98

<sup>a</sup> The most popular concession services/activities indicated were: fishing, hiking, rafting.

**Attitudes About Management Strategies.** Several items in the questionnaire examined user attitudes about possible management strategies at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Users were asked, for example, the extent they opposed or supported several potential new strategies for this park. Table 32 shows that the most strongly supported strategies were to provide more

opportunities for escaping crowds (74%), more opportunities for viewing wildlife (70%), not changing a thing about the park (68%), more recycling containers (64%), requiring all dogs be kept on leash at all times (59%), and more trash cans (58%). The least supported strategies were to close the park to all recreation and tourism activities (13%), provide food for sale (18%), limit the number of people allowed per day (20%), and provide downloadable mobile phone applications (23%).

Table 32. Day user attitudes about management at the park

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
More opportunities for escaping crowds	74
More opportunities for viewing wildlife	70
Do not change anything / keep things as they are now	68
More recycling containers	64
Require all dogs be kept on leash at all times	59
More trash cans	58
More opportunities for hiking	56
Improved maintenance or upkeep of facilities / services	53
Natural buffers to block view of development outside park	53
More information / education (nature, history, archeology)	51
Restore park to historical conditions	48
More enclosed shelters	47
More group picnic areas	40
More paved trails	39
Make park more pet friendly	39
More programs led by park rangers	28
Wireless internet access within the park	28
Limit the number of large groups allowed per day	28
Downloadable mobile phone applications	23
Limit the number of people allowed per day	20
Food for sale (restaurants, snack shops, etc.)	18
Close this park to all recreation / tourism activities	13

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users whose response was “support” or “strongly support” management action.

Park users were also asked the extent that they would oppose or support possible service reductions at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Table 33 shows overall low support for service reductions with the highest support for returning the park to a natural area (17%), and fewer ranger patrols (16%). The least supported service reductions were for reduced janitorial services (7%), scaled down facilities (e.g., restrooms, shelters; 8%), and fewer hours open (9%).

Table 33. Day user support of possible service reductions at the park

	Day Users (%) <sup>a</sup>
Return the park to natural area	17
Fewer ranger patrols	16
Reduced ground maintenance	14
Fewer hours open	9
Scaled down facilities	8
Reduced janitorial services	7

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) of users whose response was “support” or “strongly support.”

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- Over half (52%) of day users would consider participating in a Let’s Go program. Programs with the most interest were camping (26%), canoeing (25%), stargazing (25%), and hiking (24%). The least supported Let’s Go programs were scenic bicycling on roads (13%), mountain biking (13%), geocaching (13%), rock climbing (14%), and disc golfing (14%). The most popular “other” programs visitors were interested in learning about were outdoor survival skills, plant identification, and swimming.
- Approximately 2% of day users indicated using a concession service or activity (e.g., fishing, rafting, bicycling, scenic or historic tour) while at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most popular concession service / activity were fishing, hiking, and rafting.
- Users most strongly supported management strategies designed to provide more opportunities for escaping crowds (74%), more opportunities for viewing wildlife (70%), not changing a thing about the park (68%), more recycling containers (64%), requiring all dogs be kept on leash at all times (59%), and more trash cans (58%). The least supported strategies were to close the park to all recreation and tourism activities (13%), provide food for sale (18%), limit the number of people allowed per day (20%), and provide downloadable mobile phone applications (23%).
- There was overall low support for service reductions in the park. The highest support was for returning the park to a natural area (17%), and fewer ranger patrols (16%). The least supported service reductions were for reduced janitorial services (7%), scaled down facilities (e.g., restrooms, shelters; 8%), and fewer hours open (9%).

**Sociodemographic Characteristics of Users**

Table 34 shows demographic characteristics of users. There were more female (55%) than male (45%) users at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The average age of respondents was 46 years old, and the largest proportions of users were 60 to 69 years old (21%), 50 to 59 years old (17%), and 20 to 29 years old (17%). Almost all respondents were white (i.e., Caucasian; 88%), with few American Indian or Alaskan Native (4%), Black or African American (3%), Hispanic / Latino (3%), and Asian (1%). The average annual household income before taxes of respondents was approximately \$38,400, and the largest proportion of users had incomes from \$10,000 to \$29,999 (28%), \$30,000 to \$49,999 (20%), and \$50,000 to \$69,999 (20%). Visitors to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site appear generally less wealthy than the Oregon population at large (Oregon median household income in 2010 was \$51,994). Almost all users (96%) considered English as the primary language spoken in their homes.

Table 34. Day user demographic characteristics

	Day Users <sup>a</sup>
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	55
Male	45
<b>Age</b>	
Less than 20 years old	7
20 – 29 years	17
30 – 39 years	15
40 – 49 years	14
50 – 59 years	17
60 – 69 years	21
70 – 79 years	5
80+ years old	4
Average age (mean years)	46
<b>Household income (before taxes)</b>	
Less than \$10,000	10
\$10,000 – \$29,999	28
\$30,000 – \$49,999	20
\$50,000 – \$69,999	20
\$70,000 – \$89,999	9
\$90,000 – \$109,999	6
\$110,000 – \$129,999	3
\$130,000 – \$149,999	1
\$150,000 – \$169,999	1
\$170,000 or more	2
Average income (mean dollars)	38,400
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White (Caucasian)	88
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4
Black / African American	3
Hispanic / Latino	3
Asian	1
Other	1
<b>Language spoken most often at home</b>	
English	96
Spanish	3
Other	1

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are percentages (%) unless specified as means or averages.

Table 35 shows that almost all users resided in the USA (99%). Furthermore, 92% of users resided in Oregon, 4% resided in Washington, and 4% resided in other states. Among users, 84%

of park users resided in the Willamette Valley region of Oregon (<http://www.guidetooregon.com/regions/map.html>), 6% resided in the Coastal region, 3% resided in the Portland Metro region, and 1% resided in the Central region of the state. No respondents lived in the Southern, Eastern, or Mt Hood / Gorge regions of the state.

Table 35. Day user location of residence

	Day Users (%)
Country	
USA	99
Canada	1
State	
Oregon <sup>a</sup>	92
Washington	4
Other <sup>b</sup>	4

<sup>a</sup> In total, 84% of park users resided in the Willamette Valley region of Oregon, 6% resided in the Coastal region, 3% resided in the Portland Metro region, and 1% resided in the Central region of the state. No respondents lived in the Southern, Eastern, or Mt Hood / Gorge regions of the state.

<sup>b</sup> Less than 1% of day users came from Alaska, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, and Ohio.

Table 36 shows that 75% of users said that nobody in their group had a disability, whereas 25% had at least one group member with a disability. Of those who had a disability, 22% was associated with walking, 8% with hearing, 6% with sight, and another 3% with learning.

Table 36. Day user disabilities

	Day Users (%)
Disability in group	
No	75
Yes <sup>a</sup>	25

<sup>a</sup> Types of disabilities: walking = 22%, hearing = 8%, learning = 3%, and sight = 6%.

**Section Summary.** Taken together, results in this section showed that:

- There were more female (55%) than male (45%) users at this park.
- The average age of users was approximately 46 years old, and the largest proportions of users were 60 to 69 years old (21%), 50 to 59 years old (17%), and 20 to 29 years old (17%).
- The average annual household income before taxes of respondents was approximately \$38,400, and the largest proportion of users had incomes from \$10,000 to \$29,999 (28%), \$30,000 to \$49,999 (20%), and \$50,000 to \$69,999 (20%). Visitors to Sarah Helmick

State Recreation Site appear generally less wealthy than the Oregon population at large (Oregon median household income in 2010 was \$51,994)

- Almost all respondents were white (i.e., Caucasian; 88%), with few American Indian or Alaskan Native (4%), Black or African American (3%), Hispanic / Latino (3%), and Asian (1%).
- Almost all respondents (96%) reported English as their primary language spoken in their homes.
- Approximately 92% of users resided in Oregon, 4% resided in Washington, and 4% resided in other states. Among users, 84% of park users resided in the Willamette Valley region of Oregon, 6% resided in the Coastal region, 3% resided in the Portland Metro region, and 1% resided in the Central region of the state. No respondents lived in the Southern, Eastern, or Mt Hood / Gorge regions of the state.
- In total, 75% of users said that nobody in their group had a disability, whereas 25% had at least one group member with a disability. Of those who had a disability, 22% was associated with walking, 8% with hearing, 6% with sight, and another 3% with learning.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

### **Management Recommendations**

Based on these results from surveys of day and overnight users, the following recommendations, in no particular order, are proposed for management of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site:

- Almost all day and overnight users traveled to this park in their own vehicles (89%), so adequate parking is important and should be considered in planning and management.
- Approximately 30% of users brought dogs with them to this park. Furthermore, 59% of all visitors supported requiring dogs be on leash at all times and only 39% supported making the park more pet friendly. Managers may want to consider examining enforcement of existing pet regulations in the park.
- A majority of all users (98%) were satisfied with their experiences and the conditions at this park. Satisfaction, however, was consistently lower for the amount (49%), and quality (51%) of information and education materials and programs. Managers may wish to evaluate these services to users to ensure they are meeting visitor needs.

- Given that over 30% of park visitors were over the age of 60 and 25% of users had disabilities (22% with disabilities related to walking), managers may want to consider evaluating access throughout the park and perhaps even obtaining a current ADA or related audit.
- Approximately 14% of day users felt crowded at the park. These results suggest that crowding in this park is in the “suppressed crowding” range, and crowding is likely limited by management, situational factors, or natural factors and may offer unique low-density experiences.
- Users most strongly supported strategies designed to provide more opportunities for escaping crowds (74%), more opportunities for viewing wildlife (70%), not changing a thing about the park (68%), more recycling containers (64%), requiring all dogs be kept on leash at all times (59%), and more trash cans (58%). Managers may want to consider some or all of these strategies.
- An Importance – Performance analysis showed that all park attributes were in the “keep up the good work” category, indicating that users thought that staff were doing a good job managing conditions and experiences.
- The largest proportion of users depended on official internet websites (37%) as the first primary source of obtaining information about parks such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Given these findings, it is imperative for staff to ensure that agency and park internet websites are easy to navigate, up to date, and provide comprehensive information.
- Almost all park visitors (94%) were able to find the information they needed when planning their visit to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. However, some visitors (6%) were not able to find all information needed. The most popular information needed was further information about maps of the park, river access, and address of park on website.
- Users also provided 181 verbatim open ended comments on what they found to be the most outstanding features or things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. The most common outstanding features and things to do involved: (a) barbecue and picnic areas; (b) cleanliness of park, sand, and water; (c) peace and quiet; (d) hiking; (e) openness and lack of crowds; (f) swimming and playing in the water; and (g) the natural beauty. This information could be added to the Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site

website to inform future visitors regarding what other visitors feel are the most outstanding features at the park.

- Users provided 106 verbatim open ended positive and negative comments, and suggestions for possible improvement of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site and other park related issues. The most common concerns raised involved: (a) play structures for children; (b) easier and more access to the river and beach; (c) easier and safer access to bathrooms and picnic areas for wheelchairs, elderly, and strollers; (d) bicycle racks; (e) quantity of facilities (barbecue grills, trash cans, tables, benches, restrooms); (f) adding a disc golf course; (g) litter on beach; (h) smoking ban; (i) off leash dogs; and (j) maintaining natural setting.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

### *Positive Comments*

- Thank you for taking the time to read this.
- A very nice park to enjoy a nice day. Please keep it as is.
- I love this park.
- Do what you can to keep the park open. It's a really nice spot. Very relaxing and a great place for families to go. Should have more advertising or listings in local material. Thank you.
- Fine as is. Wonderful park.
- Don't change a thing.
- We love Sarah Helmick.
- Hard to improve because of flooding every winter. Leave it alone.
- I have seen the sign on Hwy 44 many times. On a whim decided to visit today; sure glad we did. Thanks.
- I have visited here since the 1940's shortly after Camp Adair closed. My wife lived about 1/2 mile south of the park and we came here to swim and picnic.
- I love Helmick. We have been coming here for years.
- I think this park is very quaint. I like how quiet and peaceful it is. I personally wouldn't change a thing.
- It's amazing.
- It's fine just as it is.
- It's lovely the way it is.
- It's my first time, and so far, my kids and I have enjoyed our time. It was very pleasant.
- It's wonderful already.
- Just keep it open.
- Just keep it open to the public.
- Keep it just as it is; clean and a quiet natural place to enjoy a break. It's great.
- Keep it like it is now. You have a good thing going. Please don't ruin it by trying to improve what is already excellent.
- Keep the park as it is.
- Keep up the good work.
- Leave it as is.
- Leave it in the clean, rustic condition it's in.
- Leave it like it is. I like Sarah Helmick Park.
- Leave it the way it is.
- Leave the same.
- Maintain it like it currently is.
- Everything is clean and we enjoy our time here.
- It's beautiful here.
- I really love this park.

- Amazing and gorgeous site. Beautiful. Thank you.
- It's awesome.
- Its natural beauty is why I love it here.
- Ok as is. A natural and quiet spot for rest and lunch.
- Ok the way it is.
- Perfect.
- Remain open. Don't let change get to the park.
- This park is perfect just as it is. Our family loves to come here for picnics and I have lunch here for work at least once a week. Don't change a thing please.
- We feel it is a great spot for families to have birthdays.
- We like is as it is.
- We love it here. Thank you for providing an inexpensive place for my family to get out of the house and play together in such a beautiful setting.
- You're doing fine. Just keep it going.
- You're doing fine.

#### ***Negative Comments and / or Issues for Improvement***

- A better handicap picnic area for older people so it is easier to get to level walking areas.
- A disc golf course please.
- Add a disc golf course.
- Add an 18 or 9 hole disc golf course. Disc golf is huge in this area and would bring tons of visitors to the park.
- An open sided rain shelter with BBQ pit or stand on the south side where there is a higher elevation.
- A kiddie fence on the river for safety.
- Better bathrooms.
- Better beach access.
- Better phone signal.
- Diving boards, rope swings, and fewer arrowheads in the water.
- Bicycle trails.
- Bike rack.
- Add a kids park, like swings.
- Add water slides to the river or ropes to swing into river.
- Clean barbecue racks.
- Clean up trash from beach on the riverside.
- Cleaner bathrooms.
- Cleaner paths to water.
- Do not allow smoking.
- Easier access to water so it is more wheelchair friendly.
- Easier and more access to water for older folks.
- Fire pits or barbecue.

- Add a good play structure and outdoor rock climbing wall.
- Have easier access to the river.
- I would put in a playground for kids. That is the only thing missing.
- Just make easier access to bathrooms.
- Keep moss off the buildings like the one near the entrance.
- Maybe have trash bins on the south side.
- Make it bigger with more trails.
- Make people keep dogs on leashes.
- Do not allow smoking.
- Maybe kids toys to play on.
- Maybe more tables.
- Maybe plant trees to reduce road noise.
- More beach space and access. Easier access to river. Maybe repave stairs to river.
- More pet friendly.
- More provision for electrical outlets where visitors can use their laptops or other electrical devices. Enclosed shelters for winter season with a game room and vending machines. I like to study at this park but I could not use my laptop to access the internet. I would love to pay something towards improvement of facilities at the park.
- More restrooms, more trash cans, more grills and more horseshoe pits.
- More tables and benches.
- More trash cans.
- More walking trails.
- Needs a play structure for children. Would not pay more than \$5 per day per car. Maybe ask for donations instead.
- Overnight camping or a burn pit on the beach to have a fire. The stairway down to the water could be better improved.
- Play structure.
- Playground for the kids and grills for barbecue.
- Please do your best to preserve the natural conditions of the location. There are plenty of private developments that provide developed amenities. I do understand budget restraints and public demand. Thanks for taking my input.
- Please put in more barbecue stands.
- Provide garbage containers.
- Put a better sign at the highway.
- Make a better access to the creek.
- Put in a play structure for kids.
- Removal of logs in water and trails.
- Remove invasive and non-native plants such as ivy.
- Sidewalk repairs, showers or cleaning stations with running water, more garbage cans, and an overnight area.
- Signs on Highway 99.

- Small area for play structure for kids.
- Hazard cliff edges should be marked.
- Spread the tables out further in the park.
- Swings and playground equipment for children.
- The only thing I notice is the ton of bugs, but I don't think you can do anything about that.
- To get to the river to swim is a hazard, it has been for years.
- Wheelchair friendly trail down to the river for a child.

**APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRES**

**Day Visitor Experiences and Perceptions  
at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site**



**Please Complete this Survey and Return it as Soon as Possible**

Participation is Voluntary and Responses are Anonymous

Thank You for Your Participation

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A Study Conducted by:



*Nature*  
**HISTORY**  
*Discovery*

We are conducting this survey to learn about your experiences at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Your input is important and will assist managers improve your experiences at this park. **Once you have completed this survey, please return it as soon as possible.**

1. Before this trip, had you ever visited Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (**check ONE**)
  - No
  - Yes → if yes, how many day trips have you made to this park in the past 12 months? (**write number**) \_\_\_\_\_ trip(s)
  
2. How many hours did you spend at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**write number**) \_\_\_\_\_ hour(s)
  
3. Please check all recreation activities you did at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip. (**check ALL THAT APPLY**)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> A. Hiking or walking	<input type="checkbox"/> E. Outdoor photography	<input type="checkbox"/> I. Fishing
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Dog walking	<input type="checkbox"/> F. Sightseeing	<input type="checkbox"/> J. Swimming/ wading
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Running or jogging	<input type="checkbox"/> G. Picnicking or barbecuing	<input type="checkbox"/> K. Other (write response) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Bicycling on local roads	<input type="checkbox"/> H. Bird or wildlife watching	_____
  
4. From activities in Question 3 above, what ONE primary activity did you do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip?  
 (**write a letter that matches your response**)  
 Letter for primary activity \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Which of the following best describes the purpose of your trip? (**check ONE**)
  - Primarily for recreation – this park was my main destination
  - Primarily for recreation – my main destination was NOT this park
  - Primarily for business, family, or other reasons – this park was a side trip
  - Some other reason
  
6. About how far from your home did you travel to get to this park? (**write number of miles**) \_\_\_\_\_ mile(s)
  
7. Overall, how dissatisfied or satisfied were you with your **overall experience** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (**check ONE**)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied
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8. How dissatisfied or satisfied were you with the **natural environment** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (**check ONE**)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied
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9. How dissatisfied or satisfied were you with the **facilities / services** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (**check ONE**)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied
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10. How unlikely or likely are you to return to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site in the future? (**check ONE**)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Very Unlikely	<input type="checkbox"/> Unlikely	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither	<input type="checkbox"/> Likely	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Likely
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11. How **important** is it to you that each of the following is at Sarah Helmick SRS? (circle one number for **EACH**)

	Not Important		Neither		Extremely Important
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care).	1	2	3	4	5
Number of toilets / bathrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
Absence of litter.	1	2	3	4	5
Presence of park rangers / personnel.	1	2	3	4	5
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of park trails.	1	2	3	4	5
Condition / maintenance of park trails.	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, baby stroller).	1	2	3	4	5
Facilities for groups to gather.	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of things to do.	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	1	2	3	4	5
Personal safety.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of information / education programs or materials.	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of information / education programs or materials.	1	2	3	4	5
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Signs about directions within the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Signs about directions to the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Parking for vehicles.	1	2	3	4	5

12. Now, how **dissatisfied or satisfied** were you with the following at Sarah Helmick SRA? (circle a number for **EACH**)

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care).	1	2	3	4	5
Number of toilets / bathrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
Absence of litter.	1	2	3	4	5
Presence of park rangers / personnel.	1	2	3	4	5
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of park trails.	1	2	3	4	5
Condition / maintenance of park trails.	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller).	1	2	3	4	5
Facilities for groups to gather.	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of things to do.	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	1	2	3	4	5
Personal safety.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of information / education programs or materials.	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of information / education programs or materials.	1	2	3	4	5
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Signs about directions within the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Signs about directions to the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Parking for vehicles.	1	2	3	4	5

13. To what extent do you *oppose or support* each of the following possible management actions at Sarah Helmick SRS?  
**(circle one number for EACH)**

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither	Support	Strongly Support
Provide more opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more opportunities for viewing wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
Food for sale (restaurants, snack shops, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more group picnic areas.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more opportunities for hiking.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more paved trails.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more trash cans.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more recycling containers.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more information / education about nature, history, or archeology.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more programs led by park rangers.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide wireless internet access within the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide downloadable mobile phone applications.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide more enclosed shelters.	1	2	3	4	5
Improve maintenance or upkeep of facilities / services.	1	2	3	4	5
Require all dogs be kept on leash at all times.	1	2	3	4	5
Make the park more pet friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
Provide natural buffers to block views of development outside the park.	1	2	3	4	5
Restore it to historical conditions (e.g., replace non-native with native plants)	1	2	3	4	5
Limit the number of people allowed per day.	1	2	3	4	5
Limit the number of large groups allowed (e.g., no more than 10-20 people).	1	2	3	4	5
Close this park to all recreation / tourism activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Do not change anything / keep things as they are now.	1	2	3	4	5

As agency budgets for management of this park decrease over time, we may be faced with difficult decisions related to service reductions. Before making any changes, however, we feel that it is important to know what changes would be supported or opposed by current visitors. As a result, the following questions list various hypothetical changes that managers could make in the future. Please indicate your level of opposition or support to these possible changes.

14. To what extent would you *oppose or support* each of the following possible service reductions at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site?  
**(circle one number for EACH)**

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither	Support	Strongly Support
Fewer hours open.	1	2	3	4	5
Fewer ranger patrols.	1	2	3	4	5
Scaled down facilities (e.g., fewer restrooms, picnic shelters).	1	2	3	4	5
Reduced janitorial services.	1	2	3	4	5
Return the park to a natural area.	1	2	3	4	5
Reduced ground maintenance (e.g., mowing, landscaping).	1	2	3	4	5

15. To what extent did you feel crowded at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**circle a number**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all Crowded		Slightly Crowded		Moderately Crowded		Extremely Crowded		

16. **Including yourself**, how many people accompanied you at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? \_\_\_\_\_ person(s)

17. Did you or anyone in your group bring dog(s) with you to Sarah Helmick SRS? (**check ONE**)  No  Yes

18. Did anyone in your group have a disability?

- No  
 Yes → if yes, what are these disabilities? (**check ALL THAT APPLY**)  Hearing  Sight  Walking  
 Learning  Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. When you were thinking about visiting an Oregon State Park such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site, about how often did you obtain information from each of the following sources when making your decision? (**circle one number for EACH**)

	Never		Sometimes		Often
A. Official internet websites (e.g., Oregon State Parks, Travel Oregon).	1	2	3	4	5
B. Social media internet websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter).	1	2	3	4	5
C. Brochures.	1	2	3	4	5
D. Newspapers.	1	2	3	4	5
E. Magazines.	1	2	3	4	5
F. Books.	1	2	3	4	5
G. Television.	1	2	3	4	5
H. Videos / DVDs.	1	2	3	4	5
I. Radio.	1	2	3	4	5
J. Community organization or church.	1	2	3	4	5
K. Health care providers.	1	2	3	4	5
L. Work.	1	2	3	4	5
M. Friends or family members.	1	2	3	4	5
N. Highway signs.	1	2	3	4	5
O. Previous visit.	1	2	3	4	5
P. Other (write response) _____	1	2	3	4	5

20. From the list of sources in question 19 above, which **ONE** would you use **FIRST** when obtaining information about an Oregon State Park? (**write letter**)

**Letter** \_\_\_\_\_

21. When planning your visit to Sarah Helmick SRS, were you able to find the information you needed? (**check ONE**)

- Yes  
 No → if no, what additional information did you need? (**write response**) \_\_\_\_\_

22. How did you get to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**check ONE**)

- My family's personal vehicle → how many total people were in the vehicle? \_\_\_\_\_ person(s)
- Somebody else's personal vehicle → how many total people were in the vehicle? \_\_\_\_\_ person(s)
- Other (write response) → how many total people were in the vehicle? \_\_\_\_\_ person(s)

23. If you had NOT been able to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, what would you have done? (**check ONE**)

- Gone somewhere else for the same activity → how far from home is the place you would go instead? \_\_\_\_\_ miles(s)
- Gone somewhere else for a different activity → how far from home is the place you would go instead? \_\_\_\_\_ miles(s)
- Come back another time
- Stayed home
- Gone to work at my regular job
- Something else (none of these)

24. If you had NOT been able to go to Sarah Helmick SRS for this visit, what other park(s) would you have considered going to instead? (**list park names**) \_\_\_\_\_

25. Would you recommend a Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site visit to friends or family members? (**check ONE**)

- Yes
- No → if no, why not? (**write response**) \_\_\_\_\_

26. What do you feel are the most outstanding features or things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (write response)

27. If Oregon State Parks offered weekend programs for beginners to learn basic outdoor skills, would you/your family consider participating in such a program at a nearby park?

- No
- Yes → if yes, what types of activities would you/your family be interested in learning about? (**check ALL THAT APPLY**)
  - Birding     Disc golfing     Hiking     Mountain biking     Scenic bicycling on roads
  - Camping     Fishing     Horseback riding     Rafting     Stargazing
  - Canoeing     Geocaching     Kayaking     Rock climbing     Other \_\_\_\_\_

28. During your visit to this park, did you or members of your personal group use a concession service/activity such as a guided trip/tour (e.g., fishing, rafting, bicycling, scenic, historic) or equipment rental (e.g., kayak, bicycle)?

- No
- Yes → if yes, what type of concession service/activity (write in response)

29. Did you participate in any moderate physical activity during this trip (for example walking, bicycling, canoeing at a moderate pace)? (check **ONE**)

- No
- Yes → if yes, how much time did you spend in moderate physical activity for this trip? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

30. Did you participate in any vigorous physical activity during this trip (for example jogging, walking, or bicycling at a vigorous pace, breaking a sweat, heart beating rapidly)? (check **ONE**)

- No
- Yes → if yes, how much time did you spend in vigorous physical activity for this trip? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

31. Is your level of physical activity at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site more than, less than, or about the same as your level of physical activity in your day-to-day life? (check **ONE**)

- My physical activity is MORE at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site than my daily life.
- My physical activity is LESS at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site than in my daily life.
- My physical activity is ABOUT THE SAME at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site as it is in my daily life.

32. To what degree did this Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site visit result in the following health benefits for you? (circle one number for EACH)

	Not at all					A great deal
A. Reducing your stress.	1	2	3	4	5	
B. Improving your level of physical fitness.	1	2	3	4	5	
C. Improving your physical health.	1	2	3	4	5	
D. Improving your mental health.	1	2	3	4	5	
E. Reducing your anxiety.	1	2	3	4	5	

33. For each of the following categories, please estimate how much you and other members of your party spent and plan to spend on this trip both inside the Park and within **30 miles** of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. **Please round off to the nearest dollar.**

- Motel, lodge, cabin, B&B, other lodging: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Camping: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Restaurants and bars: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Groceries: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Gasoline and oil: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Park entry, parking, or recreation use fees: \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Recreation and equipment (guide fees, equipment rental): \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- Souvenirs, clothing, and other miscellaneous: \$\_\_\_\_\_.

34. Are you staying away from home either inside the Park or within 30 miles of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**check ONE**)

No

Yes → if yes, how many nights are you staying away from home inside the Park or within 30 miles of this Park?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ night(s)

35. Considering the amount that you spent on this trip, how much more would you have spent on this trip before deciding not to take it? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

36. Are you: (**check ONE**)  Male  Female

37. How old are you? (**write response**) \_\_\_\_\_ years old

38. Which of the following best describes you? (**check ONE**)

White (Caucasian)

Hispanic / Latino

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Other (write response)

Black / African American

Asian

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_

39. What language is spoken most often at your home? (**check ONE**)

English

Spanish

Russian

Other (write response) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where do you live? (**write responses**) City / town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode \_

41. Which of these broad categories best describes your *current annual household income before taxes*? (**check ONE**)

Less than \$10,000

\$90,000 to \$109,999

\$10,000 to \$29,999

\$110,000 to \$129,999

\$30,000 to \$49,999

\$130,000 to \$149,999

\$50,000 to \$69,999

\$150,000 to \$169,999

\$70,000 to \$89,999

\$170,000 or more

Please tell us how we can improve Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site:

Thank you, your input is important! ***Please return this survey as soon as possible.***

**APPENDIX C: UNCOLLAPSED PERCENTAGES**

**Day Visitor Experiences and Perceptions  
at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site**



**Please Complete this Survey and Return it as Soon as Possible**

Participation is Voluntary and Responses are Anonymous

Thank You for Your Participation

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A Study Conducted by:



We are conducting this survey to learn about your experiences at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. Your input is important and will assist managers improve your experiences at this park. *Once you have completed this survey, please return it as soon as possible.*

1. Before this trip, had you ever visited Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (check **ONE**)
  - 25% No
  - 75% Yes → if yes, how many day trips have you made to this park in the past 12 months? (write number) 7.52 trip(s)
  
2. How many hours did you spend at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (write number) 2.86 hour(s)
  
3. Please check **all** recreation activities you did at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip. (check **ALL THAT APPLY**)
 

47% <b>A.</b> Hiking or walking	20% <b>E.</b> Outdoor photography	7% <b>I.</b> Fishing
24% <b>B.</b> Dog walking	34% <b>F.</b> Sightseeing	37% <b>J.</b> Swimming/ wading
5% <b>C.</b> Running or jogging	63% <b>G.</b> Picnicking or barbecuing	23% <b>K.</b> Other (write response) <u>see report</u>
7% <b>D.</b> Bicycling on local roads	19% <b>H.</b> Bird or wildlife watching	
  
4. From activities in Question 3 above, what **ONE primary activity** did you do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (write a letter that matches your response)
 

**Letter** for primary activity see report
  
5. Which of the following best describes the purpose of your trip? (check **ONE**)
  - 71% Primarily for recreation – this park was my main destination
  - 8% Primarily for recreation – my main destination was NOT this park
  - 13% Primarily for business, family, or other reasons – this park was a side trip
  - 8% Some other reason
  
6. About how far from your home did you travel to get to this park? (write number of miles) 29.19 mile(s)
  
7. Overall, how dissatisfied or satisfied were you with your **overall experience** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (check **ONE**)
 

2% Very Dissatisfied	< 1% Dissatisfied	0% Neither	35% Satisfied	63% Very Satisfied
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8. How dissatisfied or satisfied were you with the **natural environment** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (check **ONE**)
 

1% Very Dissatisfied	0% Dissatisfied	< 1% Neither	38% Satisfied	61% Very Satisfied
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9. How dissatisfied or satisfied were you with the **facilities / services** at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (check **ONE**)
 

2% Very Dissatisfied	2% Dissatisfied	7% Neither	39% Satisfied	51% Very Satisfied
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10. How unlikely or likely are you to return to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site in the future? (check **ONE**)
 

< 1% Very Unlikely	2% Unlikely	2% Neither	24% Likely	72% Very Likely
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11. How **important** is it to you that each of the following is at Sarah Helmick SRS? (circle one number for **EACH**)

	Not Important		Neither		Extremely Important
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care).	0%	1%	2%	36%	61%
Number of toilets / bathrooms.	0	3	9	46	42
Cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms.	0	1	2	35	62
Absence of litter.	1	0	5	32	62
Presence of park rangers / personnel.	1	4	25	40	30
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel.	0	0	11	38	51
Number of park trails.	1	6	36	38	18
Condition / maintenance of park trails.	2	4	31	36	27
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, baby stroller).	7	6	27	30	30
Facilities for groups to gather.	6	4	23	28	39
Variety of things to do.	2	2	34	36	27
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	0	1	12	34	54
Personal safety.	1	2	12	31	54
Number of information / education programs or materials.	15	10	39	22	13
Quality of information / education programs or materials.	15	8	40	20	17
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park.	6	5	28	36	26
Signs about directions within the park.	6	5	24	38	27
Signs about directions to the park.	6	6	21	38	30
Parking for vehicles.	1	3	14	40	42

12. Now, how **dissatisfied or satisfied** were you with the following at Sarah Helmick SRA? (circle a number for **EACH**)

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall cleanliness of park (e.g., graffiti, lawn care).	1%	0%	2%	36%	61%
Number of toilets / bathrooms.	0	2	7	45	47
Cleanliness / conditions of toilets / bathrooms.	2	1	8	38	51
Absence of litter.	1	0	4	34	62
Presence of park rangers / personnel.	0	1	12	36	52
Courteousness of park rangers / personnel.	0	0	7	30	63
Number of park trails.	1	4	29	38	30
Condition / maintenance of park trails.	1	3	24	39	34
Ease of movement or access (e.g., wheelchair, elderly, stroller).	2	5	26	40	28
Facilities for groups to gather.	1	2	23	37	37
Variety of things to do.	1	3	25	42	30
Opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	1	1	13	36	50
Personal safety.	0	1	12	36	51
Number of information / education programs or materials.	1	2	48	26	23
Quality of information / education programs or materials.	1	1	48	28	23
Information specifically about conditions or hazards in the park.	2	1	39	33	26
Signs about directions within the park.	1	2	33	33	31
Signs about directions to the park.	2	1	24	39	34
Parking for vehicles.	1	0	13	35	52

13. To what extent do you **oppose or support** each of the following possible management actions at Sarah Helmick SRS?  
**(circle one number for EACH)**

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither	Support	Strongly Support
Provide more opportunities for escaping crowds of people.	1%	2%	24%	40%	34%
Provide more opportunities for viewing wildlife.	1	2	28	37	33
Food for sale (restaurants, snack shops, etc.)	33	24	26	12	7
Provide more group picnic areas.	2	9	50	28	12
Provide more opportunities for hiking.	2	4	39	36	20
Provide more paved trails.	4	12	45	26	14
Provide more trash cans.	2	3	38	37	21
Provide more recycling containers.	1	5	31	38	26
Provide more information / education about nature, history, or archeology.	2	4	44	31	20
Provide more programs led by park rangers.	5	10	57	18	10
Provide wireless internet access within the park.	23	18	32	13	15
Provide downloadable mobile phone applications.	21	10	47	11	12
Provide more enclosed shelters.	6	7	40	31	16
Improve maintenance or upkeep of facilities / services.	2	3	43	36	18
Require all dogs be kept on leash at all times.	7	11	23	21	38
Make the park more pet friendly.	9	6	45	24	16
Provide natural buffers to block views of development outside the park.	3	3	41	31	22
Restore it to historical conditions (e.g., replace non-native with native plants)	3	9	40	27	21
Limit the number of people allowed per day.	25	23	32	13	7
Limit the number of large groups allowed (e.g., no more than 10-20 people).	24	24	26	16	11
Close this park to all recreation / tourism activities.	55	14	18	7	7
Do not change anything / keep things as they are now.	3	3	28	32	36

As agency budgets for management of this park decrease over time, we may be faced with difficult decisions related to service reductions. Before making any changes, however, we feel that it is important to know what changes would be supported or opposed by current visitors. As a result, the following questions list various hypothetical changes that managers could make in the future. Please indicate your level of opposition or support to these possible changes.

14. To what extent would you **oppose or support** each of the following possible service reductions at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site?  
**(circle one number for EACH)**

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither	Support	Strongly Support
Fewer hours open.	41%	33%	16%	8%	1%
Fewer ranger patrols.	18	29	38	12	3
Scaled down facilities (e.g., fewer restrooms, picnic shelters).	40	33	20	6	2
Reduced janitorial services.	38	35	19	6	2
Return the park to a natural area.	29	21	34	12	5
Reduced ground maintenance (e.g., mowing, landscaping).	29	35	23	11	2

15. To what extent did you feel crowded at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**circle a number**)

71%	16%	5%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Not at all Crowded	Slightly Crowded		Moderately Crowded			Extremely Crowded		

16. **Including yourself**, how many people accompanied you at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? 5.60 person(s)

17. Did you or anyone in your group bring dog(s) with you to Sarah Helmick SRS? (**check ONE**) 70% No 30% Yes

18. Did anyone in your group have a disability?

75% No  
 25% Yes → if yes, what are these disabilities? (**check ALL THAT APPLY**) 8% Hearing 6% Sight 22% Walking  
 3% Learning 1% Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. When you were thinking about visiting an Oregon State Park such as Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site, about how often did you obtain information from each of the following sources when making your decision? (**circle one number for EACH**)

	Never		Sometimes		Often
A. Official internet websites (e.g., Oregon State Parks, Travel Oregon).	48%	8%	22%	10%	13%
B. Social media internet websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter).	73	8	13	3	3
C. Brochures.	61	10	22	5	2
D. Newspapers.	64	11	20	4	1
E. Magazines.	69	10	18	2	1
F. Books.	69	11	16	3	2
G. Television.	73	9	13	3	1
H. Videos / DVDs.	79	9	10	1	2
I. Radio.	71	9	15	3	2
J. Community organization or church.	65	14	12	7	3
K. Health care providers.	81	6	9	4	1
L. Work.	69	9	15	7	1
M. Friends or family members.	29	3	29	17	23
N. Highway signs.	27	6	23	24	20
O. Previous visit.	19	3	17	24	38
P. Other (write response) _____	67	3	15	5	11

20. From the list of sources in question 19 above, which **ONE** would you use **FIRST** when obtaining information about an Oregon State Park? (**write letter**)

**Letter** see report

21. When planning your visit to Sarah Helmick SRS, were you able to find the information you needed? (**check ONE**)

94% Yes  
 6% No → if no, what additional information did you need? (**write response**) see report

22. How did you get to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**check ONE**)

- 89% My family's personal vehicle → how many total people were in the vehicle? 2.66 person(s)
- 4% Somebody else's personal vehicle → how many total people were in the vehicle? 4.13 person(s)
- 6% Other (write response) → how many total people were in the vehicle? 4.67 person(s)

23. If you had NOT been able to go to Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site for this visit, what would you have done? (**check ONE**)

- 55% Gone somewhere else for the same activity → how far from home is the place you would go instead? 22.70 miles(s)
- 3% Gone somewhere else for a different activity → how far from home is the place you would go instead? N/A miles(s)
- 8% Come back another time
- 22% Stayed home
- 0% Gone to work at my regular job
- 12% Something else (none of these)

24. If you had NOT been able to go to Sarah Helmick SRS for this visit, what other park(s) would you have considered going to instead? (**list park names**) see report

25. Would you recommend a Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site visit to friends or family members? (**check ONE**)

- 99% Yes
- 1% No → if no, why not? (**write response**) see report

26. What do you feel are the most outstanding features or things to do at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site? (write response)

see report

27. If Oregon State Parks offered weekend programs for beginners to learn basic outdoor skills, would you/your family consider participating in such a program at a nearby park?

- 49% No
  - 51% Yes → if yes, what types of activities would you/your family be interested in learning about? (**check ALL THAT APPLY**)
- |              |                  |                      |                     |                               |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 19% Birding  | 14% Disc golfing | 24% Hiking           | 13% Mountain biking | 13% Scenic bicycling on roads |
| 26% Camping  | 23% Fishing      | 21% Horseback riding | 20% Rafting         | 25% Stargazing                |
| 25% Canoeing | 13% Geocaching   | 19% Kayaking         | 14% Rock climbing   | 5% Other _____                |

28. During your visit to this park, did you or members of your personal group use a concession service/activity such as a guided trip/tour (e.g., fishing, rafting, bicycling, scenic, historic) or equipment rental (e.g., kayak, bicycle)?

- 98% No
- 2% Yes → if yes, what type of concession service/activity (write in response)

see report

29. Did you participate in any moderate physical activity during this trip (for example walking, bicycling, canoeing at a moderate pace)? (check **ONE**)

- 57% No
- 43% Yes → if yes, how much time did you spend in moderate physical activity for this trip? 51.10 minutes

30. Did you participate in any vigorous physical activity during this trip (for example jogging, walking, or bicycling at a vigorous pace, breaking a sweat, heart beating rapidly)? (check **ONE**)

- 10% No
- 90% Yes → if yes, how much time did you spend in vigorous physical activity for this trip? 54.29 minutes

31. Is your level of physical activity at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site more than, less than, or about the same as your level of physical activity in your day-to-day life? (check **ONE**)

- 23% My physical activity is MORE at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site than my daily life.
- 27% My physical activity is LESS at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site than in my daily life.
- 50% My physical activity is ABOUT THE SAME at Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site as it is in my daily life.

32. To what degree did this Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site visit result in the following health benefits for you? (circle one number for EACH)

	Not at all				A great deal
A. Reducing your stress.	3%	1%	14%	29%	54%
B. Improving your level of physical fitness.	20	10	35	18	17
C. Improving your physical health.	14	10	31	24	22
D. Improving your mental health.	6	3	18	30	43
E. Reducing your anxiety.	3	1	17	33	47

33. For each of the following categories, please estimate how much you and other members of your party spent and plan to spend on this trip both inside the Park and within **30 miles** of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site. **Please round off to the nearest dollar.**

- Motel, lodge, cabin, B&B, other lodging: \$ see report
- Camping: \$ see report
- Restaurants and bars: \$ see report
- Groceries: \$ see report
- Gasoline and oil: \$ see report
- Park entry, parking, or recreation use fees: \$ see report
- Recreation and equipment (guide fees, equipment rental): \$ see report
- Souvenirs, clothing, and other miscellaneous: \$ see report

34. Are you staying away from home either inside the Park or within 30 miles of Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site on this trip? (**check ONE**)

93% No

7% Yes → if yes, how many nights are you staying away from home inside the Park or within 30 miles of this Park?  
6.64 night(s)

35. Considering the amount that you spent on this trip, how much more would you have spent on this trip before deciding not to take it? \$ 53.36

36. Are you: (**check ONE**) 45% Male 55% Female

37. How old are you? (**write response**) 46 years old

38. Which of the following best describes you? (**check ONE**)

88% White (Caucasian) 3% Hispanic / Latino 4% American Indian or Alaskan Native 1% Other (write response)  
 3% Black / African American 1% Asian 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander see report

39. What language is spoken most often at your home? (**check ONE**)

96% English 3% Spanish 0% Russian 1% Other (write response) see report

40. Where do you live? (**write responses**) City / town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode see report

41. Which of these broad categories best describes your *current annual household income before taxes*? (**check ONE**)

10% Less than \$10,000	6% \$90,000 to \$109,999
28% \$10,000 to \$29,999	3% \$110,000 to \$129,999
20% \$30,000 to \$49,999	1% \$130,000 to \$149,999
20% \$50,000 to \$69,999	1% \$150,000 to \$169,999
9% \$70,000 to \$89,999	2% \$170,000 or more

Please tell us how we can improve Sarah Helmick State Recreation Site:

see report

Thank you, your input is important! ***Please return this survey as soon as possible.***